

Three eventful days for the gambling industry

19 March 2014: The Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Bill – incorporating a last-minute amendment imposing a levy on remote operators offering betting on horseracing – was approved by the House of Lords on 19 March 2014. Subject to the “ping-pong” process, whereby the House of Commons must approve that amendment, all that will be needed is Royal Assent for the changes introduced by the Bill to take effect. Read more about preparing for the changes in our article at <http://cliftondavies.com/preparing-proposed-changes-law-gambling-licensing-advertising-bill/> and let us know what we can do to help.

20 March 2014: As part of his Budget announcement, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne confirmed that the Government will proceed with its plans to introduce a point of consumption tax for remote gambling. Details are included in the draft Finance Bill, showing that from 1 December 2014, operators will have to pay 15% duty on the gross profits they make from customers who are located in the UK, prompting the Remote Gambling Association to express fears that this *“will heighten the risk that British licensees will lose significant market share to black market operators and will undermine the regulatory objectives of DCMS and the Gambling Commission”*. The Chancellor also announced an increase to 25% in the tax rate applicable to fixed-odds betting terminals but, in a move welcomed by a beleaguered bingo industry, announced that bingo duty would be reduced to 10%.

21 March 2014: The Association of British Bookmakers (ABB), British Amusement & Catering Trade Association (BACTA), Bingo Association (BA), National Casino Forum (NCF) and Remote Gambling Association (RGA) have joined together to form the Industry Group for Responsible Gambling (IGRG). It is aiming to provide a structure to better promote socially responsible gambling in the British market. Its first exercise will be to undertake a “stock-take exercise” of responsible gambling initiatives in order to highlight good practices that could be shared across sectors and inform any future decision about work that the associations could undertake collaboratively through the IGRG. It will also focus on overseeing the review of the Gambling Industry Code for Socially Responsible Advertising, as requested by DCMS.

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